

The ***Ornament for Clear Realization*** describes the ten topics of the ten Mahayana practice instructions in two verses:

*Practice, the truths,
The three jewels such as the Buddha,
Non-involvement, tirelessness,
Thoroughly upholding the path, [22]*
*The five visions, clairvoyance's
Six qualities and what are called "the paths of seeing
And meditation": these practice instructions
Should be known as having a tenfold character. [23]*

Bodhisattvas on the path of accumulation should now listen, contemplate and meditate on the Mahayana practice instructions. This will enhance their practice and their progress on the path to enlightenment. **These practice instructions should be known as having a tenfold character** since they describe the following ten topics:

1. The two truths: the two truths are explained in order to understand the nature and the aspect of **practice**
2. The four noble truths: **the four noble truths** are the focal object of practice
3. Going for refuge: going for refuge to **the three jewels such as the Buddha** and so forth serves as the basis of one's practice
4. The diligence of non-involvement: the diligence of **non-involvement** counteracts the laziness of engaging in non-virtuous actions and assists practitioners in stabilizing their practice
5. The diligence of tirelessness: the diligence of **tirelessness** counteracts the laziness of sloth/procrastination and assists practitioners in increasing their practice
6. The diligence of thoroughly upholding the path of practice: the diligence of **thoroughly upholding the path** of practice counteracts the laziness of self-contempt/faintheartedness and assists practitioners in averting the deterioration of their practice
7. The five visions: **the five visions** are special powers that practitioners need in order to become more self-sufficient
8. The six clairvoyances: **clairvoyance's six qualities**, i.e. the six types of clairvoyance, are needed in order to quickly complete the accumulation of merit
9. The path of seeing: practitioners on the **path of seeing** have newly cultivated the meditative absorption directly realizing emptiness. The principal function of this meditative absorption is to permanently eliminate the *intellectually acquired* ignorance etc.
10. The path of meditation: practitioners on the **path of meditation** have achieved the cessation of the intellectually acquired ignorance etc. and their meditative absorption directly realizing emptiness now eliminates the *innate* ignorance etc.

The first three topics (the two truths, the four noble truths, and going for refuge) are from the point of view of practice itself; the next three topics (the three types of diligence) are from the point of view of avoiding the manifestation of negativities in the continua of practitioners; the following two topics (the five kinds of vision and the six clairvoyances) are from the point of view of increasing the practitioners' qualities, and the last two topics (the path of seeing and the path of meditation) are from the point of view of permanently eliminating negativities in the continua of practitioners.

The nature and the aspect of practice were explained by way of expounding on the two truths (during the philosophy course in the spring of 2011). Following from that is the explanation of the four noble truths as the focal object of practice:

The Four Noble Truths

After his enlightenment Buddha Shakyamuni turned the *First Wheel of Dharma* which is also called the "Dharma Wheel of the Four (Noble) Truths". This means that he gave the discourse on the four noble truths to his former five ascetic companions at Deer Park in Sarnath/Varanasi. The discourse on the four noble truths is the Buddha's first and most essential teaching. It encapsulates all of Buddhist philosophy and serves as the foundation and the framework for all the other teachings the Buddha gave during his forty years of teaching. This discourse is found in the ***Sutra on the Four Noble Truths***.

English: The four noble truths

Tibetan: འཕགས་པའི་བདེན་པ་བཞི། / བདེན་པ་བཞི། *Phag-pai Den-pa Zhi* (or short:) *Den-pa Zhi*

(*Phag-pa* = noble/superior/Arya, *Den-pa* = truth/reality, *Zhi* = four)

The four noble truths are:

1. The (noble) truth of suffering

Tibetan: སྤྱག་བསྐྱེད་འཕགས་པའི་བདེན་པ་། / སྤྱག་བསྐྱེད་བདེན་པ་། *Dug-ngel Phag-pai Den-pa* (or short:)

Dug-ngael Den-pa (*Dug-ngael* = suffering/dissatisfaction/distress/ misery/discomfort/frustration/ pain/displeasure, *Phag-pa* = noble/superior/Arya, *Den-pa* = truth/reality)

2. The (noble) truth of the origin (of suffering)

Tibetan: ཀུན་འབྱུང་འཕགས་པའི་བདེན་པ་། / ཀུན་འབྱུང་བདེན་པ་། *Kuen-Jung Phag-pai Den-pa* (or short:)

Kuen-Jung Den-pa (*Kuen-Jung* = origin/origination/source, *Kuen* = all/complete/entire, *Jung* = to origin/to arise/to come forth/to emerge/to occur)

3. The (noble) truth of cessation (of suffering and the origin of suffering)

Tibetan: འགོག་པ་འཕགས་པའི་བདེན་པ་། / འགོག་བདེན་པ་། *Gog-pa Phag-pai Den-pa* (or short:) *Gog-Den*

(*Gog-pa* = cessation/extinction/eradication)

4. The (noble) truth of the path (that leads to the cessation of suffering and the origin of suffering)

Tibetan: ལམ་འཕགས་པའི་བདེན་པ་། / ལམ་བདེན་པ་། *Lam Phag-pai Den-pa* (or short:) *Lam-Den* (*Lam* = path/path consciousness/ course/method/pathway/systematic way)

1. THE TRUTH OF SUFFERING

In general suffering, or in Sanskrit *dukkha*, refers to the mental factor of feeling which accompanies any awareness – either one of the five sense consciousnesses or the mental consciousness. Therefore, when the Buddha says that, for instance, our present mind and body are a **truth of suffering** he means that our present mind and body are *in the nature* of suffering. It is important to understand that the Buddha does not say that our existence *is* suffering, for our mind and body are not the mental factor of feeling. To be in the nature of suffering rather means that with our present body and mind *the potential* to experience suffering is always there. Thus, our present mind and body are a **truth of suffering** because with such physical and mental aggregates the possibility or the danger to experience suffering is ever-present.

According to Buddhist psychology, there are three types of feeling that accompany any kind of consciousness/awareness. The three types of feeling are:

1. Pleasant feeling
2. Unpleasant feeling
3. Neutral feeling

Of those three feelings, particularly pleasant and unpleasant feelings cover a vast spectrum of different experiences. Pleasant feelings include feelings of pleasure, happiness, joy, elation, euphoria, bliss, delight, rapture, well-being, enjoyment, satisfaction, exaltation, and so forth. Unpleasant feelings include feelings of displeasure, dissatisfaction, frustration, unhappiness, worry, discomfort, suffering, misery, pain, depression, sadness, distress, gloom, despair, sorrow, hurt, and so forth.

Neutral feelings refer to feelings of neutrality that are neither pleasant nor unpleasant and thus none of the feelings above.

Feelings are mental factors and thus awarenesses, and are either associated with any of the five sense consciousnesses or with a mental consciousness.

